Disbanding of Special Operations Group

2855. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether as per army authorities the proposed decision of new Jammu and Kashmir Government to disband the Special Operations Group (SOG) of the police will weaken counter-insurgency operations;

(b) whether Central Government was consulted before implementation of above decision; and

(c) if so, what was the reaction of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) As per the Governor of Jammu & Kashmir's address to the joint session of Jammu & Kashmir Legislature, the Jammu & Kashmir Government is committed to assimilating/relocating the personnel of Special Operations Group in the regular police force so that they are subjected to discipline and are made accountable for their deeds. The Governor's address has also indicated that the State Government is fully alive to the legitimate security concerns of the State and intends to stand firm and steadfast in discharging its obligations under the Constitution. So far no action has been taken by State Government with regard to its proposed relocation of the Special Operations Group.

The army has indicated to Government that the counter terrorism operations being conducted by the army in Jammu & Kashmir are unlikely to be affected by this decision and would continue as hithertofore.

Release of Defence Land to AP Government for the construction of a Hospital

2856. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has agreed in the past for release of 10 acres of Defence Land under G.L.R. Survey No.667, situated just opposite Hanuman Temple, Trimulgherry in favour of A.P. Government for the construction of Hospital;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when Government propose to release said land?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Threat posed by open Indo-Nepal Border

†2857. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that about one thousand five hundred K.M. Indo-Nepal open border could proved to be a serious threat in view of the present Terrorist activities;

(b) whether there is need to re-consider the Indo-Nepal Trade and Transit Treaty;

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to be vigilant towards the rising threats and the plan formulated by Government in this regard; and

(d) if not, the reasons for not considering the matter seriously?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) Government is concerned about the ISI misusing the Nepalese territory and the open India-Nepal border for activities inimical to India's interest. These issues have been taken up with the Government of Nepal and both sides have agreed that they would not allow their territory to be used for activities inimical to the interests of either country. Bilateral institutional mechanisms have also been evolved to jointly address issues relating to maintenance of peace and prevention of criminal activities in the border areas. Further, the Special Service Bureau is being deployed along the border with Nepal to strengthen security in the border areas.

The India-Nepal Trade Treaty has been renewed after incorporating suitable modifications to the Protocol to the Treaty without changing the basic spirit and framework of the Treaty. Regular dialogue of Customs officials also takes place under the Agreement for Cooperation to Control

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.